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DEPARTMENT FOR MAJ ANDREW BRINKMAN, PM/ISO  
DEPARTMENT PLEASE PASS NWC CAPT TOM HALE, DR. MIKE MAZARR

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KISL](#) [MARR](#) [MOPS](#) [SP](#)

SUBJECT: SPAIN WELCOMES PROPOSED NWC FIELD STUDIES ON ISLAM

REF: A. STATE 160184

- [1](#)B. MGEN STEEL - AMB AGUIRRE LETTER OF NOVEMBER 13
- [1](#)C. LLORENS-PEARSON-MAZARR E-MAILS

[1](#)1. (SBU) SUMMARY: U.S. Mission Spain warmly welcomes the May 2008 proposed thematic trip on Islam in the West and is pleased to comment on the feasibility of such a program in Spain. Home to nearly one million Muslims, most of them immigrants, Spain is an ideal destination for subject study tour. According to the second annual Muslim survey released December 10 by the Spanish Ministries of Justice, Interior, and Labor and Social Affairs, four out of five Muslims in Spain feel integrated. Upwards of 80 per cent of those surveyed reported no obstacle to practicing their religion and felt completely or pretty well adapted to Spanish culture. Muslims who reported liking Spain "well," "very well," or "pretty well," numbered three quarters of those polled. End summary.

[1](#)2. (SBU) Post proposes a program that would focus on the aspects of Islam as an immigration issue here, including increasing sensitivity of Spanish authorities to the threat of radical Islam among disenfranchised populations. The United States enjoys excellent counter-terrorism cooperation from Spain. Having fought Basque terrorists for four decades, Spain is no stranger to terrorism on its soil. As a result of the March 2004 Madrid train bombings carried out by al-Qaeda sympathizers, as well as Spain's proximity to the Maghreb and geographic position as the gateway to Europe, Spain understands the potential for and the dangers of Islamic radicalism. Time permitting, briefers could include Spanish government officials who have oversight of religious entities within the Ministry of Justice, security officials in the Ministry of Interior, integration experts at the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, NGOs with multi-cultural emphases, and academics. Post's Muslim Engagement Working Group (MEWG) recommends and can facilitate contact with the Muslim community in Madrid. Field trips outside of Madrid could include Cordoba, for background on the historic presence of Islam in Spain, reachable as a day trip, and/or Barcelona -- a regional capital facing the challenges of cultural integration of Muslim immigrant communities. Barcelona is home to approximately 60,000 Pakistani immigrants alone, the majority of them unaccompanied male heads of household.

[1](#)3. (U) As we move forward in coordinating such a program, Post would appreciate additional information. It would be helpful to know the number of program days available. In addition, please advise whether there will be funding available for interpretation. Please note due to language barriers (many Muslim leaders do not command Spanish, much

less English) and local circumstances, lack of such translation could severely curtail worthwhile contacts and programming.

14. (U) The group's Control Officer will be E. Strother Murray, Political-Military Officer. She can be reached by e-mail [murrayes@state.gov](mailto:murrayes@state.gov) or by phone 34-91-587-2393 (office) and FAX 34-91-587-2391.  
AGUIRRE